

K Lover 155

Chapter 155: Side Of Disrespect

"Yes, Your Highness."

"Come closer, Henry. I have a small, simple task for you," Caius said deviously, the corners of his lips lifting to form a sly smile.

"Yes, Your Highness," Henry repeated as he moved closer, keeping his head down. "What can this humble servant do, Your Highness?"

"Not much," Caius replied. "I'm sure it's a task I can leave up to your discretion."

"Of course, Your Highness. I will make sure to do it to the best of my abilities."

"Wonderful," Caius said and leaned back, the smile still on his face. "A certain maid served Rose lunch while I was there. Not only was the meal atrocious, but she thought to add a side of disrespect. Now, I want you to ask the maid exactly what she did, and I'm sure you can devise a befitting punishment."

Henry lifted his head so fast, that he lightly strained his back and had to put a hand to it to ease the pain. "A maid?"

Caius raised a brow. "Is something wrong with your hearing?" he asked.

Henry shook his head. "I apologize, Your Highness. I shall find the maid at once and punish her accordingly."

"Another thing. You're now in charge of Rose's meals. If she is served anything as atrocious as what she was served for lunch, there will be hell to pay. Do you understand?" Caius asked.

Henry froze for a moment, then he nodded. "Yes, Your Highness."

"That is all."

Henry bowed and withdrew. The sound of the door closing echoed in the space.

"You have finally lost it, Your Highness."

"What?" Caius asked, jerking his head toward his cousin.

"Putting the steward in charge of her meals? Are you trying to get her killed?" he asked.

"Are you saying someone in the castle might try to do that?" Caius asked, his expression thoughtful.

Rylen narrowed his eyes. "It's one thing to be cruel to her. It's another to put her in unnecessary danger."

"Cruel?" Caius narrowed his eyes.

"You took her from her family."

"No, I didn't," Caius said flagrantly.

Rylen stared at him in disbelief. "Is that what you think?"

Caius's eyes darkened. "She came with me. It was a choice she made."

"To save her fath—never mind, Your Grace. Just don't put her in unnecessary danger."

"I am not. The last time was a mistake. It won't happen again." Caius's jaw hardened, and his right hand closed into a fist.

Rylen wanted to speak more on the issue, but he knew it would be a waste of time. Caius would only do what he wanted. He knew the crown prince was trying to get back at his father in some way, but he was worried about the poor redhead getting dragged into the middle of it.

The steward was in charge of the general affairs of the castle. He was the highest-ranking staff member, so putting him in charge of a mere peasant's meal was atrocious. Henry wasn't even directly in charge of their meals—he made sure things went right, but he didn't personally oversee them.

Rylen knew neither of his parents would be pleased about this, and news around the castle traveled fast. He was certain it would reach the Queen's ears by dinnertime.

Rylen couldn't wait for the crown prince to move on to his next obsession. This was dragging on longer than it needed to. Not to mention the situation with the auction—it had the redhead right in the middle.

"Yes, Your Grace," Rylen replied glumly to the crown prince. He could give his counsel, but that was it. He couldn't force the crown prince to see reason.

"Anything else?" Caius asked.

"Yes," Rylen said, snapping out of it. "We did receive a message from Lord Leopold. He and the men arrived in Futherfield without any mishap. He has begun to put things in place to make a counterattack against the bandits. His wife sends her greetings."

"Very well," he whispered. "You can send a letter back and tell the Lord to send a messenger as soon as he has something new."

"Already ahead of you. As soon as the letter arrived, I sent out a messenger with the exact message you just said," Rylen replied with a knowing expression.

Caius couldn't help his smile. His cousin was the breath of fresh air he needed, and to think he chose to come to the castle to serve him willingly. Caius had returned to the castle after nearly seven years to see a strange, familiar boy swearing his fealty to him.

To think it has been three years since then. Not a lot of things have changed since, but Rylen has proven himself to Caius more than anyone ever has. Caius sometimes thought, if he had a brother, this would be what it would feel like.

Caius trusted Rylen with his life, and the same could be said about the other. Though Rylen didn't agree with his methods and never shied from telling him so, Caius had no reason to worry about whether he had Rylen's backing.

And without question, he would climb mountains and wreak havoc on the valleys if it was required of him on Rylen's behalf. Though Caius liked to think not a lot had changed—it had. A lot.

When Rylen first met him, he often treated Caius as though the crown prince was perfect. After all, only the perfect person could be the next king of Velmount. But it didn't take Rylen long to figure out that the crown prince was flawed—more flawed than the average citizen of Velmount.

"Hmm," Caius simply said and turned his gaze away.

"You know it wouldn't kill you to say more than that," Rylen replied.

"More than what?" Caius asked, feigning ignorance.

"Never mind," Rylen said and turned his attention to the documents as he began to gather them up.

"Mother is throwing a ball," Caius suddenly said to break the awkwardness in the air.

"What?" Rylen asked, the documents falling to the table.

"Yes."

"Why?" he asked suspiciously, looking at Caius as though he must be the reason for this.